

**Remarks at a Celebration of
American Jazz**

June 19, 2008

Welcome to the East Room of the White House. I welcome members of my Cabinet and my administration; a music lover, Senator Orrin Hatch from the great State of Utah; distinguished guests. We're so pleased you're here to celebrate a great American art form, jazz. And we hope you're jazz lovers, because you're going to hear some good music tonight.

The story of jazz mirrors the story of our Nation. This proud musical tradition was born of the songs brought here by African slaves. Decades later, it absorbed the waltzes that accompanied immigrants from Europe. Over time, jazz helped break down barriers of prejudice between blacks and whites and even defined an age that brought new liberty to America's women.

In a twist of history, the music that came to America in chains ultimately helped America spread freedom abroad. In 1956, the State Department sent American jazz musician Dizzy Gillespie around the world on a mission to trumpet American values. He was in Turkey when word came that a group of Cypriot students stoned the U.S. Embassy in Athens. And so he was sent to the Greek capital to soothe anti-American hostility with a jazz performance. The concert atmosphere was tense. The students stormed the stage. People were nervous, until the students put Dizzy Gillespie on their shoulders, and shouted "Dizzy! Dizzy! Dizzy!" [*Laughter*]

With its spontaneity and energy and innovation, jazz expresses the best of America's character. And through it—its role in fostering freedom and equality, jazz reflects the best of America's ideals. Tonight this magnificent art form will be brought to life by some jazz masters. Grammy award winning guitarist Earl Klugh will play for us after dinner. And before dinner, we're honored to hear from saxophonist Davey Yarborough, vocalist Esther Williams from the Washington Jazz Arts Institute.

Before Davey and Esther take the stage, please join me in a toast to American jazz, but more importantly, to the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:36 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

**Remarks on Congressional Action on
the Legislative Agenda**

June 20, 2008

Good morning. This week, Congress moved forward on two important issues affecting the national security of our country.

Yesterday the House passed a responsible war funding bill that will provide vital resources to our men and women on the frontlines in the war on terror. This legislation gives our troops the funds they need to prevail without tying the hands of our commanders in the field or imposing artificial timetables for withdrawal.

The bill also supports our military families by passing an expansion of the GI bill that makes it easier for our troops to transfer unused education benefits to their spouses and their children. I want to thank the Members of Congress for their action on this legislation, and I urge the Senate to pass it as soon as possible.

Members of the House and Senate also reached a bipartisan agreement yesterday on legislation to allow our intelligence professionals to quickly and effectively monitor the plans of terrorists abroad, while protecting the liberties of Americans here at home.

My Director of National Intelligence and the Attorney General tells me that this is a good bill. It will help our intelligence professionals learn our enemies' plans for new attacks. It ensures that those companies whose assistance is necessary to protect the country will themselves be protected from liability for past or future cooperation with the Government.

The enemy who attacked us on September the 11th is determined to strike this country again. It's vital that our intelligence community has the ability to learn who the terrorists are talking to, what they're saying, and what they are planning.

I encourage the House of Representatives to pass this bill today, and I ask the Senate